

Claims

1. In an electronic device interfaced with a network, a method, comprising the steps  
of:
  - 5           executing a program on the electronic device; and  
            dynamically registering a plug-in application with the program  
            without ceasing the executing of the program, said plug-in application  
            operating in conjunction with the program to provide enhanced  
            functionality for the program.
- 10   2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of dynamically registering comprises:  
          providing a registration descriptor holding information regarding  
          the plug-in application; and  
          processing the registration descriptor to complete the registering
- 15   of the plug-in application.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the registration descriptor is a file.
4. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of dynamically registering further  
20   comprises:  
          storing the registration descriptor at a designated location to  
          indicate that the registration descriptor is to be processed.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein the electronic device has access to a directory  
25   structure containing sub-directories and wherein the designated location is in a selected  
one of the sub-directories.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic device is a computer system.
- 30   7. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic device is a web server.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein the program has a client that interacts with the  
program via a web browser.
- 35   9. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of statically registering  
additional plug-in applications the program upon initialization of the program.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the plug-in application provides dynamic web content.
11. In a server, a method, of comprising the steps of:
  - 5 providing information regarding an application at a specified storage location; and
  - in response to the information being at the specified storage location, registering the application for use in conjunction with a program on the server to provide additional functionality for the program.
- 10 12. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of registering the application includes processing the information regarding the application to perform the registering.
13. The method of claim 11, wherein the information regarding the application is  
15 encapsulated in a file.
14. The method of claim 13, wherein the file is an extensible mark-up language (XML) file.
- 20 15. The method of claim 11, wherein a client accesses the server via a web browser to interact with the program.
16. The method of claim 11, wherein other applications are registered with the program.
- 25 17. The method of claim 11, wherein the program is initialized to prepare the program for execution and wherein the registering is performed dynamically during execution of the program after the program has been initialized.
- 30 18. The method of claim 11, wherein the program is initialized to prepare the program for execution and wherein the registering is performed during initialization of the program.
19. In a distributed environment having a server and clients that access the server, a  
35 method, comprising the steps of:
  - providing a management software package on the server for managing items in the distributed environment;

providing a location wherein add-on programs may deposit information regarding the add-on programs to register with the management software package, said add-on programs enhancing functionality of the management software package; and

processing the information at the location to register add-on programs that have deposited information at the location with the management software package so that the add-on programs that are registered may be executed in conjunction with the management software package.

20. A medium for use in an electronic device that is interfaced with a network, wherein a program is executing on the electronic device, said medium holding instructions for dynamically registering a plug-in application with the program without ceasing the executing of the program, said plug-in application operating in conjunction with the program to provide enhanced functionality for the program.

21. The medium of claim 20, wherein the dynamic registering comprises providing a registration descriptor holding information regarding the plug-in application; and processing the registration descriptor to complete the registering of the plug-in application.

22. The medium of claim 21, wherein the registration description is a file.

23. The medium of claim 20, wherein the program has a client that interacts with the program via a web browser.

24. The medium of claim 20, wherein the method further comprises statically registering additional plug-in applications the program upon initialization of the program.

25. The medium of claim 20, wherein the plug-in application provides dynamic web content.

26. A medium for use in a server where information regarding an application is provided at a specified storage location that is accessible by the server, said medium holding instructions for registering the application for use in conjunction with the

program on the server to provide additional functionality for the program in response to information being at the specified storage location.

27. The medium of claim 26, wherein the program is initialized to prepare the  
5 program for execution and wherein the registering is performed dynamically during  
execution of the program after the program has been initialized.

28. The medium of claim 26, wherein the program is initialized to prepare the  
program for execution and wherein the registering is performed during initialization of  
10 the program.